



National Association  
of Letter Carriers

Fredric V. Rolando, President

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# NALC Bulletin

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**Deliver the Cure!**

## Letter Carriers Ready to Throw Strikes In Fight Against Muscular Dystrophy

### National NALC Bowl-a-Thon Set for November 1

After months of preparation, President Rolando and a host of national officers will join thousands of letter carriers, family members and supporters on Sunday, November 1 in bowling alleys across the nation in a fun-filled day to raise donations for the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA).

Hundreds of NALC branches are getting involved in the First Annual NALC Bowl-a-Thon to assist MDA.

NALC MDA Coordinator Jim Williams, a former NALC national Executive Vice President, said he hopes this event will energize NALC members in all 50 states to keep up the union's commitment to MDA as it seeks a cure for muscular dystrophy and similar afflictions.

President Rolando plans to lead a large contingent of national resident officers and headquarters staff at the AMF Alexandria Lanes where they will join members of Alexandria, Virginia Branch 567.

In Brooklyn, New York, Vice President George Mignosi will be bowling with Branch 41.

Health Plan Director Timothy O'Malley will bowl with Region 15 NBA Larry Cirelli and New Jersey Merged Branch 38 at Majestic Lanes in Perth Amboy, New Jersey. Region 10 NBA Kathy Baldwin will aim for a 300 game with R.R. McClellan Branch 3867 at Armadilla Lanes in Pasadena, Texas, while Region 12 NBA Bill Lucini is going to Thunderbird Lanes in Philadelphia with Branch 157, and Region 3 NBA Neal Tisdale will be at the S.I. Bowl Family Fun Center in Carterville, Illinois with Southern Illinois Branch 1197.

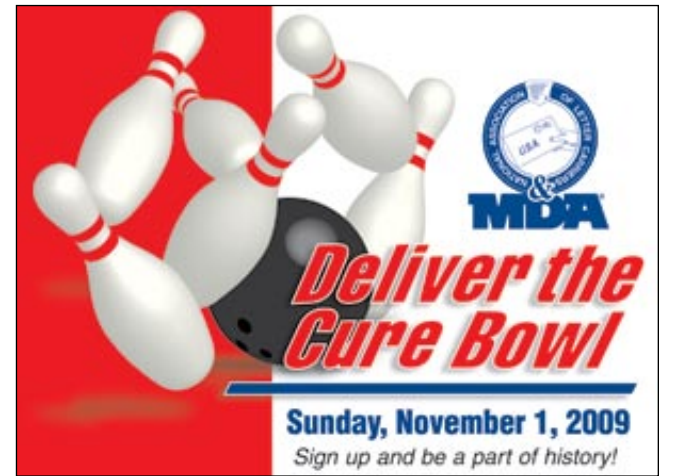
Region 5 NBA Mike Weir will be at the Brunswick Zone in St. Louis, Missouri with Branch 343, and Region 14 NBA John Casciano will be helping out Branch 18 at WonderBowl in New Bedford, Massachusetts. Region 1 NBA Manny Peralta is joining in at Fresno, California with Branch 231.

NBA Dan Toth (Region 11) will be with Branch 196 in Elyria, Ohio with others from his office in Syracuse and Schenectady, New York. Region 7 RAAs Troy Fredenberg and Jason Karnopp will be bowling with Branch 9 in Minneapolis. Region 9 NBA Judy Willoughby will be with Branches 2550 (Ft. Lauderdale) and 1071 (Miami) at the Striker's Family Sports Center in Sunrise, Florida. Region 4 NBA Roger Bledsoe plans to knock down the pins with Oklahoma City Branch 458 at a bowling center in Moore, Oklahoma.

Williams emphasized the goal of the event is to inspire branches to develop, continue or expand on year-round basis fund raising for the MDA.

The NALC will award a laptop computer loaded with NALC's software to the top Bowl-a-Thon fund-raising branch in each of the 10 membership categories. Also, the highest handicap scorer and the highest actual scorer in each branch-size category will receive a new bowling ball and shoes.

Williams asked participating branches to send in their official scoring forms to NALC Headquarters promptly following the Bowl-a-Thon.



**Be on Alert!**

## Critical Health Care Reform Votes Due for Floor Action in Congress

### Voices of Letter Carrier Families Must be Heard!



President Rolando, at left in left photo, leads NALC officers and headquarters staff in joining an AFL-CIO demonstration October 22 at a Washington hotel where a convention was underway by the insurance industry's lobbying arm, America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP), which opposes fundamental health care reforms. In center photo, AFL-CIO President Rich Trumka addresses the huge rally, and at right, NALC Executive Vice President Gary Mullins shows how he feels about the insurance companies. (Photos by Mike Shea)

NALC President Fredric V. Rolando urges members of the union and their families to keep a close watch over the debate going on in Washington right now over how health insurance will be provided in the United States for years to come — and whether average Americans will be able to afford it.

Every night on television, the newscast are focused on this issue, and with justification, because every single family, every single person in this nation will be directly affected by what happens.

In his upcoming President's Message in the November issue of the Postal Record, President Rolando dispels the notion that letter carriers need not be concerned because they already have a good health benefit plan.

Rolando gives a point-by-point description of how the provisions of the reform bill will directly affect the future of the U.S. Postal Service, and especially its costs for health benefit programs.

"Unless we fix our dysfunctional health care system, it will be difficult to get the kind of long-term relief from the pre-funding burden that the USPS needs to prosper," Rolando said.

He also said that a strong public option is needed to slow climbing costs and provide relief to employers like the Postal Service that now indirectly pick up the medical costs of the uninsured.

All of our e-Activists, and indeed all active and retired letter carriers and their family members must be ready and knowledgeable when the time comes to spring into action. The lawmakers will listen if we are strong enough.

See the November issue of the Postal Record for more information on the health care reform debate.

## FERS Sick Leave Bill Goes to White House

### Carriers Will Get Credit in Annuity for Unused Benefit

Sick leave credit for FERS annuitants that had been blocked in the Senate after winning House approval earlier in the year, won final congressional approval October 22 and was sent to the White House for President Obama's signature.

The legislation allows letter carriers and other postal and government workers under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) to receive credit for unused sick leave in the calculation of their annuities. It provides FERS postal employees and survivor annuitants — on a phased-in basis — with the same retirement benefit for unused sick leave as retirees under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS).

Those who retire before January 1, 2014 will receive 50 percent of their unused sick leave credited towards their annuity, after which point FERS employees will receive full credit on par with their CSRS counterparts.

The measure, which initially was passed by the House on a 404-0 vote June 25, at first was blocked in the Senate in a parliamentary maneuver by Sen. Jim DeMint (R-SC). It subsequently was rolled into the Defense Authorization Bill (H.R. 2647) and sent to the White House when the Senate passed the Defense bill on a 68-29 tally.

## Sixth COLA Without Any Accumulation; No 2010 Annuity Increase for Retirees

There was no accumulation toward the sixth regular cost-of-living adjustment for active letter carriers based on the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) for September, released October 16 by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The September CPI-W at 629.462 was still below the base month level of 644.303 for July 2008. The Sixth COLA, if any, will be based on CPI-W data in the report for January 2010, released in February.

Retirees under both the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) will not receive a cost-of-living adjustment in 2010 because of declining prices, according to data in the September CPI-W.

"The fact that the CPI has fallen over the past year shows just how severe the recession has been," commented President Rolando.

The retirees' COLA determination is based on the increase, if any, in the CPI-W during the year-long period between the third quarter of 2008 and the third quarter of 2009. Since there was no increase, the annuitant checks will not be adjusted.

This marks the first time since the 1970s that Social Security and federal/postal annuitants will not see an increase in their annuities. Last year, there were unusually high increases of 5.8 percent for CSRS retirees and 4.8 percent for FERS retirees, fueled by skyrocketing energy prices which have returned to normal in the past year.

As a result of the lack of a COLA increase in Social Security, the Obama administration is looking into a possible one-time payment of \$250 to seniors and the disabled to help ease the pains of the recession. Such a payment, which would also go to CSRS retirees and to FERS retirees who are not yet eligible for Social Security checks, would have to be approved by Congress.

The projected accumulation toward the 2009 Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) COLA stands at 3.2 percent according to the latest data. The 2009 FECA COLA will be based on the increase in the CPI between December 2008 and December 2009 and will be effective on March 1, 2010. FECA COLAs are applicable only in cases where death or disability occurred more than one year prior to the adjustment's effective date.

## Rolando, Collins Meet



President Rolando meets October 15 with Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME), the ranking Republican member of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee which has jurisdiction over U.S. Postal Service matters. The NALC president and Collins discussed what legislation is needed to preserve the financial stability of the U.S. Postal Service and its letter carriers.

## Four-Week Penalty Overtime Exclusion

Under terms of Article 8, Sections 4 and 5 of the NALC-USPS National Agreement, the December period during which penalty overtime regulations are not applicable will begin December 5, 2009 (Pay Period 26-09 – Week 1) and end January 1, 2010 (Pay Period 01-10 Week 2).

**Look at the Facts!**

## O'Malley Challenges NALC Members To Compare Health Benefit Plans

Nearly 500 branch Health Benefit Representatives and another 250 guests attended the annual training workshop for NALC branches and state associations in advance of the upcoming 'Open Season' period from November 9 through December 14, during which postal and federal employees and retirees have a once-in-a-year opportunity to enroll in the NALC Health Benefit Plan.

President Rolando, former President William H. Young, and NALC Health Plan Director Timothy C. O'Malley led a contingent of speakers who exhorted the gathering to keep the momentum growing from last year's successful Open Season enrollments and bring more letter carriers into the plan that is owned and operated by their own union — the NALC Health Benefit Plan.

During the sessions in Las Vegas, Nevada, with the theme of "60 Years of Excellence," O'Malley urged all members of the NALC to "Take the Director's Challenge" and link onto the website of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

Here's all you have to do to **Accept the Challenge**:

- Go to <http://www.opm.gov/insure>.
- Go to the bottom of the screen and under the title "Health," click on "Compare Health Plans" This will take you to <http://www.opm.gov/insure/health/search/planssearch.aspx>.
- Insert your Zip Code. Hit Enter. Then Select the Plans you wish to compare (up to 4 plans).
- Click "Compare Selected Plans."
- Choose an Employee Type such as "U.S. Postal Service, Annuitant." Click Next.
- Choose Pay Frequency such as "Monthly" or "Biweekly." Click Next.
- The comparison will be shown on your screen.

All of the new information for the Open Season for 2010 plans are there for you to see.

In addition, on the front page of the NALC's website, there also is a new NALC Health Benefit Plan video that you can view.

"After you've had a chance to do the comparison and read information on the Plan that is being mailed to all members, we are confident that you will agree that the NALC Health Benefit Plan is right for you and right for your family," O'Malley said.



HBP Director Timothy C. O'Malley, at right in both photos, presents "HBR of the Year" trophies to the co-winners of this year's competition: Hector Salinas of Houston, Texas Branch 283, in left photo, and Coleman Taylor of Miami, Florida Branch 1071, at right. (NALC HBP Photo)